

Legislative Youth Advisory Council

Established in 2002 ♦ Codified at 3 MRSA, § 168-A

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October 11, 2006

Dear Educators and Youth Advocates:

The Legislative Youth Advisory Council (LYAC), in partnership with Ellsworth High School and Kennebunk High School, will hold two “public forums” for Maine youth this fall. We write to request your help in publicizing these public forums and in encouraging high school-aged youth that you work with to participate in one of these forums. The forums have been scheduled as follows:

November 2, 2006 🍁 5:00-8:00 p.m. 🍁 Ellsworth High School

November 14, 2006 🍁 5:30-8:30 p.m. 🍁 Kennebunk High School

The focus of these events is to solicit input, suggestions and testimony from students on issues of importance to Maine youth, (including, but not limited to: youth civic engagement, anti-bullying and harassment policies, enforcement of underage drinking policies, suicide prevention initiatives, and proposed changes to graduation requirements for Maine high school students). Public forum participants can expect to:

- ⊕ Share their views, experiences and perspectives in “issue-oriented” discussion groups;
- ⊕ Gain knowledge and insight from policy experts and peer leaders;
- ⊕ Learn about the LYAC and its role in the legislative process; and
- ⊕ Receive information on how to influence state policy.

As hosts for the public forums, Ellsworth High School and Kennebunk High School officials and students are working together with LYAC members and LYAC partner organizations to make these events a success.

Established in 2002, the LYAC is a 20-member (16 youth members and 4 legislators) advisory council to the Maine Legislature. With the authority to propose legislation, the LYAC speaks and acts on behalf of Maine youth in informing and advising legislators about policy issues of importance to young people across the state. The Legislature has directed the LYAC to hold 2 public forums on

“enhancing civic education” in our secondary schools this fall. While the law requires the LYAC to submit a report to the Legislature summarizing its findings, the LYAC will also use comments received from youth at the public forums to inform its 2007 legislative agenda.

Our goal is to have at least 100 high school-aged participants at each forum. We encourage high school educators and community-based youth advocates to form a team of 5-10 youth members and support their attendance at this forum. We need your help in publicizing this event to students in your high school classrooms and extra-curricular activities, as well as to high school-aged youth participating in your community-based program. For your convenience, we have attached a “Save-the-Date” flyer and a registration form to reproduce and disseminate as you see fit.

You can expect to be updated with more details in the days to come. For more information about the LYAC or for questions regarding these public forums, please call Phil McCarthy or Brenna Byrne, our Legislative Staff, at 287-1670 (or by using the contact information provided in the letterhead above). Further information on the LYAC, including the 2006 annual report, can be found at the Maine Legislature's website: <http://www.maine.gov/legis/opla/legyouth.htm>.

We offer our sincere thanks for your efforts to help publicize this important event and for your consideration in forming a youth team to participate in the forum.

Best regards,

Sen. Elizabeth H. Mitchell, Co-chair
Legislative Youth Advisory Council

Nelson Beaudoin, Principal
Kennebunk High School

William Connors, Principal
Ellsworth High School

Enclosure: “Save-the-Date” flyers and Registration form for LYAC Public Forum